

MEETING MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET, ST. ALBANS, VT
6:30 PM MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2021

APPROVED

Board Members: Rebecca Pfeiffer, Chair; Denis LaPointe, Vice-Chair; Dick Thayer, Tanner McCuin, Emily Biron

Board Member Absent: Matt Freedom

Staff Members Present: David Southwick, Planning & Permitting Administrator; Tammi DiFranco, Property Services Assistant, taking Minutes; Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development

Public Present: Scott Patterson, Peter Garceau, Chief Maurice LaMothe, Amber Sullivan

- A. OPEN MEETING R.Pfeiffer opened the meeting at 6:30 PM
1. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge was recited
 2. Assignment of Alternate- not necessary
 3. Consider any additions or deletions to agenda – D.Southwick noted that Case #2021-003 withdrew after the meeting had been posted. They will re-apply in the future when ready.

B. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SEGMENT – PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **Case #2021-001 / Scott Patterson / 26 Oak Street / Parcel #23064026**
CONTINUATION Applicant seeks approval for waiver of setback regulations. This property is located in the Low Density Residential (LDR) Zoning District.

R.Pfeiffer invited the applicants to come forward. All people wishing to offer testimony had already been sworn in for this hearing.

D.Southwick introduced the application and submitted the staff report for the record. No new comments had been submitted by the public. The applicant had submitted a revised drawing.

The applicant, Scott Patterson, explained that he had simplified and revised his drawing. He requested a 2 foot waiver for the front of the garage and a 4 1/2 foot waiver for the back of the garage. R.Pfeiffer stated that part of the issue the board had previously with this case was that the garage was going to be 2-stories and they were not permitted to grant a waiver for a 2-story structure. S.Patterson replied that he had changed the plans and was now only constructing a one story garage. S.Patterson explained his new

drawing and stated that the dashed line is where the required 10 foot setback is. T.McCuin asked the applicant to confirm that the garage will no longer be a staggered height and will only be single story. S.Patterson stated that the garage would be one story.

R.Pfeiffer asked if the storage area from the previous drawing was also taken out of the construction for now. S.Patterson answered yes.

R.Pfeiffer asked for public comment. There was none.

With no further comments, R.Pfeiffer closed the hearing.

2. **2. Case #2021-002 / Evelyne Martin / 197 North Main Street / Parcel #11063195**
WITHDRAWN Applicant seeks approval for a second Conditional Use - Home Industry. This property is located in the Business 2 (B2) Zoning District
3. **3. Case #2021-003 / City of St. Albans / 142 South Main Street / Parcel #26079150**
Applicant seeks approval for a Site Plan Review. This property is located in the Business 2 (B2) Zoning District.

R.Pfeiffer invited the applicants and anyone wishing to submit testimony, to come forward and swore in those wishing to submit testimony.

D.Southwick introduced the application and submitted the staff report for the record (*including the recommendation from the Design Advisory Board (DAB)*).

Peter Garceau, Chip Sawyer, and Police Chief Maurice LaMothe were present to represent the applicants.

C.Sawyer briefly explained the application. He stated that conditional use for moving the public safety facility to 142 South Main Street had been granted about a year ago. It will be primarily police operations and regional dispatch. Most of the fire operations and the apparatuses will stay on Lower Welden Street. There are changes being made to the parking lot for security reasons and some changes being made to the facade of the building for security purposes as well. The radio tower for dispatch is on the site plan. C.Sawyer explained the site plan. The building footprint will remain the same. The front area of the parking lot will remain the public parking area. The plan is to install a gate to create a secure area for police operations on the southern portion of the property. Some green space will be added and a sally port on the south side of the building. The secure parking area will be fenced in with LED lighting added to the fence. P.Garceau pointed out that there is a more up to date site plan from January 26, 2021; the only difference is the new drawing has the front parking lot lined to include all the parking spots. He also explained that the fence will go to the northwest corner of the building and the current concrete in the front will be repaired. C.Sawyer then presented the proposed elevations. There will be some windows and doors blocked off for the purposes of interior layout and security. The brick will match existing brick on the building. He also noted that the security measures and the communications necessary as part of this move, the coordination of the equipment, is a very daunting task. The city provides critical dispatch services around the region from the current Lower Welden site that will be moved to the

new site. The security and the communications are the two most driving factors for how this move is going to go and what some of the changes are that need to happen to the facility.

R.Pfeiffer asked about the required 34 parking spots. There are currently about 80 parking spots, how many public parking spots will be available after the southern side is enclosed and blocked off from the public? P.Garceau pointed out on the site plan that there will be 24 parking spots directly in front of the building. In the other parking lot adjacent to North Main Street there will be an additional 21 parking spots for a total of 45 parking spots for the general public.

D.LaPointe asked for a timeline for the demolition and new construction. P.Garceau answered that construction will start this construction season. M.LaMothe thinks that the final drawings will go out to bid sometime in March and get underway as soon as possible to have the final phase of construction done by the end of June or July.

R.Pfeiffer asked if the department would then move into the space in July or August. M.LaMothe replied that it would be ideal to be able to move into the building in July or August. Moving the Police Department will be easy, moving the dispatch will be more complex.

D.LaPointe wanted to know the applicants comments on the DAB recommendations. Also, there are some trees that are marked TBR, which he assumed means to be removed. P.Garceau stated that they are not removing any trees from the front of the building or around the bank. The only trees being removed are for the construction of the sally port. The trees around where the fence is being installed will need to be trimmed and there could be some pruning around the communications tower. The budget is tight, but if there is money available they will add some additional plantings at the end of the project. R.Pfeiffer pointed out that the DAB also recommended bike racks, were they added to the new plan? P.Garceau stated that they have not added anything to the plan since the DAB meeting. C.Sawyer stated that there is generally a place for a bike rack. This is a different project and he is not sure if there would be some sort of security issue with a bike rack. There has been no discussion on it as of yet. He thinks it seems like a simple addition but is not sure. M.LaMothe stated that there will be potentially be a community room which would make sense for a bike rack, he is just unsure of where it would be placed.

R.Pfeiffer asked for public comment.

Amber Sullivan, a resident of Locke Terrace, asked how the lighting that is being installed will affect the residents of Locke Terrace. P.Garceau pulled up the lighting site map and pointed out all the dots that represent lighting threshold numbers. When looking at the numbers on the property line it says 0.0. So there should be no additional light on Locke Terrace. There are a couple of places near the bank that are at a 0.1 level; it's a very low lighting level. All lights will be down lighted and back shielded.

With no further comments, R.Pfeiffer continued the hearing until Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 6:30 PM.

C. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Planning & Development update

- i. City Hall remains closed to the public, but staff is still working at the office.
- ii. C.Sawyer presented Planning & Development updates.
 1. Planning Commission is looking at a proposed new corridor district for North Main Street, Fairfield Street, Lake Street, and portions of South Main Street to allow for residential professional uses and locking in the house type building that you see in those areas. On Lake and Fairfield go back to more of the historic cross between professional use that were historically allowed in those districts and add some gateway design review as well. This will recognize that those are the 4 main routes into the city and they serve an important gateway function to the community. It may allow for some increased housing density along these routes which could help with the housing issues across the state.
 2. The city received a grant to develop a tool that has data on the current densities and uses in our residential districts and could inform any future proposed changes to our residential districts. There are some neighborhoods that are mismatched to their current density and form but they are in the low density residential district but they look and act like high density residential. They want to look at a better way to organize different types of neighborhoods in the city and make sure the regulations reflect what is happening there today. Perhaps introduce other residential districts to better reflect the names of what they are representing. R.Pfeiffer asked if the city would develop the tool themselves or contract it out. C.Sawyer stated that a consultant would design the tool, the city would use it. T.McCuin asked if the idea on the equity and rezoning is to get ahead of the state so that we have more control of our local area. C.Sawyer answered that he thinks there is going to be growing pressure with the addition of the social equity conversations, adding that to the affordability conversation. He would like to think that the city could come up with solutions on its own instead of waiting for the state to pressure municipalities. Having someone else create the program and inputting all the data will help us to make sense of what we currently have. R.Pfeiffer stated that a consultant may also help us ask the better questions and give us a better way to ask what we are trying to get at.
 3. The city is now a Certified Local Government with the Division of Historic Preservation and the National Historic Register. They received a grant that they will use to update the nominations forms and surveys of the St Albans Historic District. Our current survey and nomination sets is currently one of the oldest inventories, it was done in 1980. The downtown has changed since that time. We will find that some areas of the historic district that get taken out because too many of the buildings have changed and it has lost its character. There will also be areas that get added. For example,

the old Post Office building was not part of the last Historic Register because it was built in the 1930's and not yet 50 years old at the time of the last inventory completed in the 1980's.

R.Pfeiffer asked if this will give the city more control of what they can do in the Historic District, or just to clean up what is on the list. C.Sawyer stated that the most important thing that the CLG status gives us is access to money and other resources for updates and educational programs, and every once in a while for money for a rehabilitation project on a building. It also gives us more of a direct line of input for other proposals to list sites, or districts, on the National Register. They try to stay away from permitting regulations.

4. R.Pfeiffer asked for an update on the renovation of derelict/abandoned homes. C.Sawyer stated that the Dwelling Unit Density Program for Blighted Homes had its first reading at the City Council. They want to see more in the program about how we could make sure that if a project goes through that process it's going to be perpetually maintained as a 'hallmark' property. It will not come back before the council until after March.
5. D.Southwick discussed the changes for the Tree Warden and state Shade Tree Program. The Shade Tree Program helps us to define within the city what is considered to be a shade tree that the municipality is responsible for maintaining. They are working with the state right now to have a shade tree plan that will be recognized by the state and to use that as an impetus to move forward on the Tree City USA designation.

2. Enforcement update

- i. D.Southwick discussed the weekly Public Health & Safety meetings and the positive impact they are having on enforcement. When the meetings started the spreadsheet has 5 or 6 pages of property. We are now down to 1 ½ pages.
- ii. The Beverage Mart has been in compliance with their snow removal so far this winter.
- iii. George Woods has been in compliance with the tires. Every time the tire bin is full, it gets cleaned out.
- iv. R.Pfeiffer asked about the driveway decision at 105 Fairfield Street. C.Sawyer stated that they have given her all the options and she has not appealed to the state. It is on the PHSO list to watch out for a reoccurrence of parking.

3. Approval of January 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes – D&V

Motion by D.LaPointe to approve the minutes from January 4, 2021 as submitted. Second by T.McCuin and approved with all in favor.

4. Approval of January 7, 2021 Meeting Minutes - D&V

Motion by D.LaPointe to approve the minutes from January 7, 2021 as submitted. Second by T.McCuin and approved with all in favor.

5. Confirm Continuation of recessed hearing: **Thursday, February 4, 2021 6:30 PM**
6. Confirm next meeting date and time. **Monday, March 1, 2021 6:30 PM**
7. Other
 - i. D.Southwick confirmed that he will get the most updated plans from P.Garceau for the Thursday meeting and have the minutes from this meeting available.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT- None

E. ENTER DELIBERATIVE SESSION – D&V

Motion by D.LaPointe to move into Deliberative Session. Second by E.Biron and approved with all in favor at 7:45 PM.